**North Dakota State University’s College of Business *Strategic Plan, 2018-2023***

The College of Business at North Dakota State University’s (NDSU) *Strategic Plan, 2018-2023* is the collaborative result of the Dean of the College of Business (CoB), an *ad hoc* strategic planning committee, the faculty and staff of the College of Business, external stakeholders (including the College of Business’ Advisory Board), and the Provost and President of NDSU. Endorsement of the strategic plan occurred at the College of Business’ College Council on January 26, 2018.

The College’s *Strategic Plan, 2018-2023* defines the priorities for the College of Business over the next five years and seeks to ensure good stewardship of resources and support a learning environment that discovers, disseminates, and applies new knowledge for the benefit of students, the community and society.

The plan balances support for existing programs with the flexibility to allow for prioritization and growth in new areas vital to the College of Business’ mission. The plan reflects a shared understanding of what students and stakeholders want the college to be in the future.

Mission

As a community of scholars, educators, and business professionals, the College of Business at North Dakota State University supports NDSU’s mission as a student-focused, land-grant, research university by providing quality:

* educational experiences through collaboration and community engagement,
* research for the advancement of knowledge, and
* collaborations to benefit business and the greater community.

Values

The College of Business at NDSU upholds the following core values:

* We value **excellence in teaching**.
* We value an **entrepreneurial** mindset that enriches creativity and promotes innovation.
* We value **basic and applied research** that engages key stakeholder audiences—students, other researchers, industry, and the community we serve.
* We value **collaboration** with industry, the community, and other disciplines.
* We value **diversity, inclusivity**, and **multiple points of view**.
* We value **intellectual integrity, freedom of expression, and transparency** in research, teaching, learning, and service.

Planning Environment

The College of Business at North Dakota State University is an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited college. Enrollment in the College of Business grew by 25 percent in the 2006-2009 period, in step with University enrollment growth and coinciding with the College’s move to Richard H. Barry Hall, which is a 135,000 square foot facility located in downtown Fargo, North Dakota.

Since 2009, enrollments have remained near 1,500 undergraduate students and approximately 100 master’s students in the College’s Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Accountancy (MAcc) programs. In 2017, a new department, Transportation & Logistics (TL) became part of the College of Business. The new Transportation & Logistics program added approximately 100 additional graduate students to the College’s total enrollment. The College of Business’s budget and future growth are dependent on student enrollment, retention, and timely graduation.

Inspired, in part, by new leadership of the college in 2016, the college revamped its Mission Statement and entered into the strategic planning process in early 2017. The college’s new mission statement reflects a commitment to collaborate—both internally with other academic units and externally with industry and the broader community—to enhance and expand opportunities for our students.

The 44 faculty members and lecturers, six staff members, and dean working in the College of Business are a hard-working, innovative group committed to the mission of the college. The College of Business has historically been an undergraduate-focused college within NDSU, as reflected by low total graduate enrollments and a lack of a PhD granting degree program until the arrival of the TL program in 2017.

While the college’s history is important in understanding its current place, the strategic plan seeks to maintain strong undergraduate programs while making graduate excellence an area of greater emphasis and investment. The plan seeks to align college research efforts with the university’s research goals, and it emphasizes higher total research output, as well as higher quality placement. Finally, the plan’s outreach goals call on the college to rethink the meaning of service and reimagine the student learning experience, which will lead to better connections between industry professionals and the classroom.

While the plan asks a lot of faculty and staff, there is widespread stakeholder agreement that the college must drive toward greater success in the areas of research, teaching, and external engagement; aiming for excellence in all three areas aligns with the university’s mission and is the College of Business' only path to surer financial footing and appropriate resource investments.

Strategic Plan, 2018-2023

The business of the College of Business is education. And, the value proposition the college offers to students and the greater community it serves is career readiness and placement. Better placement rates of students, higher starting salaries, and student discovery of ideas and careers they never knew were possible before attending NDSU are all outcomes the college uses in evaluating its own success.

The College of Business services more than 1,500 undergraduate majors and nearly 500 minors. Beyond majors and minors, the college has contact with thousands of other students through student decisions on elective courses, through extracurricular engagement, and from guest speakers visiting the college. A big goal of the college that may always prove unreachable but is nonetheless worthwhile to keep aiming for is for every NDSU student to have some form of engagement with the College of Business. The college sees this as a worthwhile goal because “Commerce” was a course offered at the very beginning of NDSU’s history as a university, and faculty and staff believe the ideas of business are so critical that every student should have some exposure to them.

CoB’s outreach and research goals derive from the first principle of the focus being on improving student lives. Without students and without a “product” focused on improving their lives, the research work generated within the college and the outreach efforts highlighted below make little sense.

The Strategic Plan makes improved student experiences—access to more classes and more ideas, more professors engaging students with cutting edge research, more connections to industry and ideas from executives, and better and higher placements into employment—the essence of what we do. From this starting point, the plan attempts to align with *NDSU’s Strategic Vision, 2015-2020.*

Maintaining and Advancing Our Student Focus

Expand and Support Graduate Education

The College of Business’s graduate student population as a percentage of total enrollment is the lowest (in percent terms) of all of North Dakota State University’s colleges, and graduate students as a percent of total enrollment is also lower in the College of Business at NDSU than at comparable business schools.

Prior to the addition of Transportation & Logistics to the College of Business, the college had 88 graduate students in the Master of Business Administration and Master of Accountancy programs combined, which translates into just 5.5% of total college students pursuing graduate work. After adding Transportation & Logistics to the College of Business in 2017, the fraction of graduate students in the College of Business increased to 8.9%, thanks to T&L’s graduate focused programs.

Between 2018-2023, the College of Business will focus on increasing our ratio of graduate students as a percent of total students in the College of Business from 8.9% to 13%.

To expand and support graduate education, the College of Business will:

1. Better support the PhD program in Transportation and Logistics by encouraging interested faculty in the Accounting, Finance, & Information Systems (AFIS) and Management & Marketing (MM) departments to work with T&L PhD students as dissertation advisors, committee members, and co-authors.
2. Offer competitive recruitment packages to high-quality Ph.D. students in Transportation & Logistics (TL);
3. Revamp the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program and focus on providing greater flexibility for students, more industry relevant content, and scheduling (including more summer course offerings) that accelerates completion times;
4. Collaborate with other colleges at NDSU to deliver specialized programs that help attract high-quality students (e.g., Agribusiness MBA; Engineering MBA; Health MBA);
5. Expand access to our graduate offerings by creating open access certificates to students interested in specific skill acquisition, such as Digital Marketing, Data Analytics, or Leadership;
6. Increase awareness of our graduate program offerings by expanding our marketing efforts;
7. Prioritize the value of the College of Business’s graduate programs and graduate student research in fund-raising efforts.

Increase Undergraduate Student Enrollment

The undergraduate student enrollment of the College of Business is approximately 1,523 students and NDSU’s total enrollment is approximately 14,358. With 18,000 total students being a likely enrollment level in the university’s near future, the College of Business expects to be an engine of university growth and will increase enrollments at rates faster than general university enrollment growth.

To increase undergraduate student enrollment from 1,523 to 2,000 by the year 2023, the College of Business will:

1. Increase the quantity and quality of scholarships to attract a larger number of quality students;
2. Expand access to CoB by providing earlier entry and admission to the college for current students and by creating a path for immediate admission for outstanding high school students;
3. Explore partnerships with existing two-year programs in the region to allow for smooth entry into CoB;
4. Minimize enrollment barriers for minor, interdisciplinary, and pre-Business courses;
5. Enhance hands-on skill development programs, such as the Bison Fund, the *Business Connections* mentorship program, and internship programs, and embed them into majors;
6. Promote College of Business program offerings to local high schools and at recruiting fairs;
7. Reduce the total credit hours required for graduation for CoB majors to the 120 minimum required by the Higher Learning Commission and State Board of Higher Education;
8. Increase minor enrollments by reducing minor degree credits to the university’s minimum requirement and provide all College of Business minors online every summer to provide non-business majors a convenient option for completing a minor;
9. Increase efficiencies by scaling courses, expanding summer offerings, identifying program bottlenecks and adding capacity; increase reliance on industry professional educators to make degree programs more flexible, relevant, and capable of servicing larger numbers of students;
10. Offer new undergraduate certificates, such as entrepreneurship and data analytics, to increase program uniqueness and offer students industry-relevant skills;
11. Strengthen and leverage current programs of excellence, such as our Sales Certificate, to provide signature experiences to top NDSU students and attract new students to our program;
12. Develop new undergraduate majors and tracks, such as Supply Chain Management and Data Analytics, that leverage our strengths and keep CoB a cutting edge educational provider;
13. Promote undergraduate programs through a dedicated budget and support staff.

Improve Retention and Graduation Rates

Currently, 35% of full-time students who declare a Business major as a freshman graduate in four years.  The College of Business will focus on increasing our 4-year retention/graduation rate from 35% to 40% by the year 2023.  To improve retention and graduation rates, we will:

1. Expand the use of the Student Success Collaborative software to enhance targeted outreach to students regarding majors, internships, and job searches;
2. Manage course scheduling to reduce conflicting class times and provide more flexibility;
3. Enhance advising processes to identify appropriate student majors early and raise the rate of students starting and finishing in Business from 35% to the university average of 40.2%;
4. Utilize online and hybrid courses when appropriate;
5. Expand summer offerings to reduce total time until completion;
6. Expand offerings in the evening to reduce total time until completion;
7. Provide an education rich in experiential learning, interdisciplinary depth, and engagement;
8. Provide sufficient staffing to support higher enrollment.

Collaborating and Expanding Our Impact Externally

As an AACSB-accredited college within a land-grant university, engagement and outreach are integral elements of the College of Business mission. The strategies outlined below further define the College’s activities with stakeholders and focus on communication and collaboration. Over the next five years, the College of Business will attract at least 100 guest speakers to the College. The college will deepen relationships with industry by increasing the number of partnerships, internships, and mentoring experiences we offer our students. And, alumni and philanthropic engagement will double from the current annual (10-year) average of $1.2 million per year in total giving to $2.4 million per year for 2018-2023.

Indentify and Engage External Stakeholders

1. Strengthen communication and collaboration with stakeholders through various media, events, and partnerships (e.g., mentoring programs, advisory boards, program collaborations);
2. Communicate the value the College of Business adds to the community;
3. Recognize and celebrate alumni career milestones and industry success;
4. Improve access to CoB facilities for business and community events;
5. Improve faculty and staff community engagement (academic and business) by more explicitly embedding external engagement into the Service component of their position descriptions.

Pursue Outreach Activities to Strengthen and Promote the College’s Mission

1. Support faculty and staff attendance at major community events;
2. Solicit student ideas for site visits, invited speakers and roundtable discussions;
3. Encourage community outreach by faculty with invited speakers, business spotlight articles (student involvement), and faculty presentations;
4. Celebrate stakeholder achievement through annual business community events;.
5. Establish new and grow existing lecture series to bring key national and international leaders, business executives, and leading researchers to CoB.

Research and Discovery

To maintain AACSB accreditation, the CoB will support faculty in their research efforts by improving the research enterprise of the college. With suport, faculty will increase the quantity and quality of research over the next five years. Specifically, high-quality research outputs will increase from 167 peer-reviewed publications from the 2013-2017 timeframe to 225 peer reviewed publications between 2018 and 2023. The number of “B or Better” publications will also increase from 101 from the 2013-2017 timeframe to 125 over the 2018-2023 period.

Realizing the research potential of CoB will require commitment across five important dimensions:

Allocate New Resources to Support Research Excellence

***Invest in faculty and graduate students:***

1. Support the University’s Grand Challenges by leveraging synergies in current faculty and create research partnerships with other colleges to complement mutual areas of strength;
2. Invest in our strengths, as measured by key impact metrics;
3. Establish and maintain Research Excellence programs to reward outstanding research;
4. Develop research seminar programs and workshops that engage faculty and students with researchers from other colleges and universities;
5. Reduce teaching loads for high-producing research faculty and raise research expectations;
6. Streamline committee processes and reduce service loads on faculty and staff;
7. Increase endowed professorships in CoB to attract/retain research-focused faculty;
8. Establish distinguished levels of PhD student support for top doctoral students to enhance the research enterprise of the College of Business and improve graduate student recruitment.

***Invest in data and infrastructure to support the research enterprise:***

1. Create a faculty research fund to support the research priorities of the College of Business;
2. Increase awareness of library resources available to faculty, staff, and students;
3. Review existing college centers of excellence to assure sustainability of operations;
4. Develop college-wide programs to support and promote faculty research;
5. Enhance processes that enable students, faculty, and staff to find research collaborators.

Align policies and processes with the research vision

1. Perform a systematic review of research policies and procedures to ensure the following goals are being met and advanced:
   1. All tenure track and tenured faculty are sustaining good standing with the college’s Faculty Qualifications Guidelines document (i.e., “Scholarly Academics”);
   2. Research expectations in the college’s Faculty Qualifications Guidelines are raised to improve research quality and keep the College of Business on par with its peer schools;
   3. Graduate student employment is focused on advancing CoB’s research priorities;
2. Use electronic research administration tools to assure recording of all CoB research output;
3. Align the PTE policy and process with the College of Business’ Faculty Qualifications Guidelines to assure the minimal bar of research output is being met by all tenure track faculty;
4. Review policies regarding teaching and service responsibilities and, where appropriate, differentiate position descriptions to encourage higher research output;
5. Review position descriptions governing non-tenure track faculty for alignment with CoB goals;
6. Recognize and credit faculty and staff for their support of the research enterprise.

Create research development programs to support emerging areas

1. Invest in seed grants for multidisciplinary research when it aligns with CoB’s strategic priorities, as well as for emerging areas of research (e.g., entrepreneurship and innovation);
2. Invest in faculty training in new/emerging fields;
3. Hire graduate students and staff to assist in grants/funding opportunities;
4. Provide avenues for student research and communicate the importance of student research.

Ensure coordinated efforts to support and promote CoB’s research mission

1. Allocate central funds from the CoB/Dean’s office to support research priorities;
2. Create a central fund to coordinate graduate education with the research vision;
3. Collaborate with University Relations, the Graduate College, and the Office of Research and Creative Activity in order to communicate the impact of CoB’s research to stakeholders;
4. Develop new sources of funding to support innovative research in the CoB;

Tie CoB’s research initiative to the needs of North Dakota and the greater community

1. Expand support for initiatives within CoB by forming industry partnerships;
2. Improve CoB communications to display the strengths of CoB research to potential companies;
3. Support programs that communicate research to the greater community being served.